

# HOME AND GARDEN

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## Droopy Lawn Gets Personality, Sparkle With Addition of Shrubs

If a glance about your lawn and garden shows you that the area has lost its special sparkle and personality—then perhaps what you need to consider are some new shrubs.

Special treats in the shrub line are the great variety of flowering shrubs available to California gardeners. Choose from azaleas, camellias, fuchsias and the less familiar hibiscus, hydrangeas, or the sweet lavender, lilac, and abelia.

Abelia grandiflora, commonly called glossy abelia, is an old standby deservedly very popular. It reaches a vigorous six to eight feet with clean, glossy leaves that turn bronze in the Fall. White or pinkish tubular flowers appear in July to October, followed by the remaining spires which give a purplish tinge to the branches in Fall. The Edward Goucher abelia (A. goucheri) grows lower, hardier and more lacy than its parent the grandiflora. The Goucher is a hybrid between the grandiflora and schumannii. It bears lovely lilac-pink flowers from June to October.

**Unusual Choice**

Some unusual choices for low-growing flowering shrubs are the beloperone guttata (the shrimp plant) and the bouvardia. The shrimp plant is evergreen but acts best when treated as a perennial. It grows to three or four feet in a mound-like shape. Its flowers are white, purple-spotted, and enclosed in coppery-bronze bracts hence the name shrimp plant. This plant is best grown in partial shade. Bouvardia is available in the traditional white blooms as well as horticultural varieties in red, coral and pink. The white shrubs are very fragrant but not the colored varieties. Grow bouvardia in tubs in a mixture of peat moss, and sand and leaf mold, fertilizing with cottonseed meal or fish fertilizer.

Another type of shrub recommended by the California Association of Nurserymen to give a garden personality is the ornamental tree, such as the aucuba, ginger-lily and the Australian brush cherry.

**Evergreen Shrub**

An evergreen shrub, the aucuba is pleasingly tolerant of soil and temperature extremes and pleasingly provides year-round interest. Aucuba japonica or greenleaf aucuba reaches six to ten feet in an informal manner of growth. The leaves are big, thick and lush green in color and in March are intermingled with dark maroon flowers. In Fall through February bright red berries appear on the female plants. There are several known varieties of the japonica—the gold dust plant whose leaves are gold-speckled, the crotonifolia with green and white leaves and the albo-marginata with variegated leaves of dark green, light green, yellow and white. Aucubas should be planted in full shade and watered generously.

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**ADD TOPSOIL**

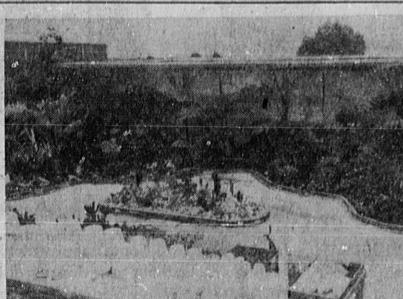
2. It may be necessary next to add topsoil. Topsoil added to the depth of four to eight inches above a heavier soil may mean future backing up of water and to prevent this the gardener should make a blend of the two layers. Select topsoil carefully, avoiding those that seem too sandy or too clayey.

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**TROPICAL PARADISE . . .** Lush tropical gardens (background) and miniature cacti gardens (foreground) are a source of delight to amateur gardeners and those who just appreciate beauty, according to K. Watanabe, K. Matoba, and G. Tanaka, owners of the Garden Center Nursery, 182nd St. and Western Ave. Many valuable ideas for home landscaping are acquired by the hundreds of persons the showplace is attracting, the owners state. Garden center, which occupies five acres, features hardy nursery stock, much of it direct from grower to patron. The firm also handles all garden supplies, hardware, and does landscaping.

## GARDENER'S CHECKLIST

- Week: Oct. 9-16, 1955
1. Don't let snails destroy your fall garden. They can be easily controlled with slug pellets.
  2. Acid loving plants such as Camellias, Rhododendrons, and Azaleas benefit from a fall application of oakleaf mold.
  3. This is the time to give the garden a fall cleanup spray. Your nurseryman will advise the best materials to use.
  4. Hurry with all gardening activities such as soil preparation, lawn planting and setting out new shrubbery. The winter rains will shortly interfere with gardening chores.
  5. Cool weather bedding plants, such as Snaps, Pansies, Stock, Violas, and Baby Primrose, can be planted now.

## Lawns Should Be Planted Before Fall Rainy Season

Now before the fall rainy season arrives is an excellent time to set in a new lawn, says the California Association of Nurserymen. And, if all the proper steps are followed completely, there is no reason to doubt the success of your lawn planting project.

There are eight steps to follow if you want a lawn that will perform well for five or 10 years:

1. Prepare the soil, breaking up and pulverizing it, picking out rocks and debris and digging up weeds by their roots. If you are working over fill, soak the area to settle it; soil deficient in nutrients can be enriched at this point by the addition of phosphorus in the future root area. Compacting soil can be corrected by mixing in a soil conditioner.
2. Add Topsoil
3. Make the seedbed smooth and flat except for a slight pitch to allow for water run off once the root area has reached its saturation point. To achieve lawn perfection next water the seedbed daily for several weeks to bring up the weeds and settle soft spots. Level the bed by raking and firm it with a roller.
4. Now it's time to add fertilizer, preferably with a spreader, and then spread the seed.
5. Pick a quiet day for sowing, divide the bed into quarters, making four approaches to the bed as you scatter the seed either by hand or, again preferably, a spreader.
6. Lightly brush the bed with a rake to assure a thorough contact of seed with seed bed soil.
7. Mutch with a pulverized, soaked and kneaded peat moss.
8. Spread this evenly, 1/4 inch thick.

For the next 20 or 30 days spend up to half an hour daily keeping the moss dark with moisture until the young grass is up.

## Garden Chatter

By LORING BIGELOW

The control of serious weeds, pests, and fungi has long been a major problem with those who garden in the Torrance area.

Perhaps the most serious weeds that we are persistently fighting are the nutgrass, and bermuda, while there are certain sections of greater Torrance where the soil nematode is very troublesome, and there are other sections that have trouble with certain types of soil borne diseases.

This last Summer, a product was introduced that the gardener can use that will go a long way in solving these problems. This product, now being sold by your nursery and garden supply dealer, is called Vapam. Vapam is a water soluble soil fumigant which will control perennial and annual broadleaf weeds and grasses including germinating seeds, soil fungi causing seed rot, damping-off and wilt, nematodes of all types that attack plants, soil inhabiting insects such as ground mealy bugs, wire worms and white grubs. The garden centipede is also controlled.

One part of Vapam treats 100 square feet of area and the product is available now in gallon jugs. Vapam cannot be used carelessly, however, as it will damage roots of established shrubs and trees, and should not be used within the drip line, and if the area to be treated is on a slope, caution should be used that movement of Vapam does not move into the root area of valuable plants.

Being a water soluble product, Vapam can be applied either from a sprinkling can, or through a hose proportioner, but should not be used through pressure equipment. Immediately after applying to the soil area you wish to treat, the area should be sprinkled with enough water to thoroughly wet the surface. This seals the fumigant into the soil and prevents the release of the gas. The soil

should be left undisturbed for about 5 days, but do not apply additional water to the treated area. At the end of this time cultivate the soil to speed up the escape of the gas. After 14 days have elapsed, the soil is ready for planting. If for any reason, such as rain, the area treated has been wet again, an additional waiting period of 14 days or more will be necessary before planting.

I have outlined above certain safety precautions to follow to avoid damage to your plants, and it is necessary to use common sense for yourself. The product is irritating to the eyes, skin and mucous membranes, so you should avoid inhaling the mist or fumes. Arrange the application so that you are always on the windward side of the treated area. Spilling or splashing of the concentrate on its dilution or any part of your body is to be avoided. Keep away from painted surfaces and off clothing, and by all means keep out of reach of children.

This product when carefully used according to instructions, can definitely be an asset to the cleanup of every troublesome pest (obnoxious weeds, soil insects, fungi) in your garden, and is certainly worth a try where results are placed higher than cost and inconvenience.

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